

TUESDAY, 9 DECEMBER 2008 (14.30pm – 16.00pm)
Workshop 2: Strategic Framework Media and Conflict
MACEDONIA A, LEVEL 1, English, Arabic

Workshop Title: Strategic Framework for Media and Conflict

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Language: (Please mark one) English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic

Workshop description:

1. What are the main points you want to raise in the workshop?

The Center of Innovation for Media, Conflict, and Peacebuilding at the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) has initiated a two-year project to develop a solid strategic framework and foundation for the use of media to prevent and mitigate conflict and build peace over the next two years. A framework such as this does not currently exist and consultations and interviews conducted over the last two months by the project lead show that such a framework is greatly needed and would be of immense value to practitioners and donors alike. The project commenced with an Experts Seminar in FY08 and will be completed in summer FY09 with a published book.

2. Give some background information to the issue you want to raise.

Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines in Rwanda is largely credited with inciting the Rwandan genocide – that left somewhere between 500,000 to 1,000,000 Rwandans dead - by using the airwaves to broadcast messages of ethnic hatred and hate propaganda aimed against Tutsis and moderate Hutus. Atrocities like this, in which the media played a catalyzing role in conflict, have prompted international donors and media assistance organizations to realize the negative power that the media can command and scramble to design programs that will prevent such atrocities in the future.

In fact, many stakeholders have gone a step further and have made the inverse assumption to justify the need for and impact of their programs - that if media can incite conflict, then it can (and should) also be used to promote peace. Operating multi-million dollar media assistance programs based on an assumption is troublesome.

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Further analysis and investigation to identify the connection is needed. A strategic framework to map and develop a strong theory that better explains the intersections between communication, media and conflict is vital to the success and longevity of projects that seek to use the media as a tool to prevent and resolve conflict and promote peace.

3. List three key questions you want the workshop to address.
 - a) What would be needed to develop a strategic framework for the development and use of media throughout the conflict cycles in peacebuilding operations?
 - b) How can we identify and disseminate best practices for using media to prevent conflict and build peace?
 - c) How can we promote collaboration between media and conflict scholars, practitioners, and donors?

4. What would be the main desired outcome of the workshop?

To involve participants in a broader discussion regarding the development of a strategic framework for media peacebuilding.

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